To create awareness amongst potential emigrant workers on the risks of illegal emigration, the Ministry has launched a nationwide awareness and publicity campaign. In addition, to facilitate the grievance redressal of emigrant workers on a time bound basis, the Ministry is launching a helpline for emigrant workers.

First Hindu Convention

1860. SHRI BALAVANT *ALIAS* BAL APTE:
SHRI SHREEGOPAL VYAS:
SHRI RUDRA NARAYAN PANY:

Will the Minister of OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the First Hindu Convention was inaugurated by the Prime Minister of New Zealand, Mr. Clark;

(b) whether Indian Ambassador/Officers of the Embassy were invited on the occasion; and

(c) whether a discussion was held regarding contribution made by India and Hindus in the convention?

THE MINISTER OF OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS (SHRI VAYALAR RAVI): (a) Yes, Sir. The New Zealand Prime Minister Rt. Hon. Helen Clark attended the Conference and addressed it.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) Yes, Sir.

Return of workers from UAE

1861. MS. SUSHILA TIRIYA:
SHRI UDAY PRATAP SINGH:

Will the Minister of OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that thousand of Indian workers in United Arab Emirates (UAE) have returned to India;

(b) if so, the reasons thereof;

(c) the total number of labourers who have been asked to leave UAE; and

(d) the reaction of Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF OVERSEAS INDIANS AFFAIRS (SHRI VAYALAR RAVI): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The Government of the UAE had announced a general amnesty scheme for three months beginning from June, 3 to September 2, 2007 which was later extended upto November 2, 2007 for persons who were staying illegally in UAE either to leave the country without penalty or regularize their stay.

(c) About 70,000 Indian expatriates who were staying illegally benefited from the amnesty and have either left the country or regularized their stay.

(d) Gulf countries from time to time declare Amnesty for illegal residents who offer on opportunity to leave the country without facing any legal action. Once Amnesty is declared, the Indian Missions take up the matter with the local authorities for either regularizing the stay of the Indian workers or organizing smooth issue of Emergency Certificates for their deportation to India. This Ministry coordinates with the State Government authorities, Ministry of Home Affairs and Ministry of Civil Aviation for ensuring their safe passage back to India.

Indians in jails of Gulf Countries

1862. PROF. P.J. KURIEN: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of Indians languishing in various jails of Gulf Countries, country-wise;

(b) the details of steps taken by Government to get them released;

(c) whether it is a fact that the Embassies are not giving adequate legal support to the Indians in custody;

(d) the details of such complaints; and

(e) the action taken by Government to ensure that Indian workers get adequate legal support in litigation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI E. AHAMMED): (a) As per the latest information available, there are 2314 Indian nationals in jails in Gulf countries as follows:—

	Name of country	Number of Indians in Jails
1.	Bahrain	114
2.	Kuwait	252
3.	Oman	42
4.	Qatar	32
5.	Saudi Arabia	939
6.	U.A.E.	935
	TOTAL:	2314

(b) to (e) The Government of India, through Indian Missions and Posts abroad and through bilateral meetings with the officials of the concerned countries, make all possible efforts to get Indian nationals in foreign jails released quickly and provide necessary assistance which includes seeking clemency of the Rulers of these countries wherever it is possible, requesting for speedy trials, seeking remission of sentence, seeking consular access to the detainees and prisoners, providing advice/guidance in legal and other matters, ensuring fair and humane treatment in foreign jails and facilitating repatriation to India on their eventual release. The Government also pass on information concerning prisoners to their families in India.

Annual conference of PBD

1863. SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH: Will the Minister of OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the next Annual Conference of the Pravasi Bharatiya Diwas (PBD) would focus on rural population and their development;

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